Peters also examines other escape routes in Indiana beyond Floyd County, the Underground Railroad sites in and near New Albany, and other individuals known for helping fugitive slaves. The book's illustrations include photographs of Floyd County descendants of Underground Railroad workers. An appendix presents census and military records for Floyd County African American residents, a detailed bibliography, and extensive chapter notes. The author lists freedom papers, bills of sale, and deeds of manumission filed in the Floyd County Recorder's Office. Under the threat of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 and the Indiana Exclusion Act of 1851, these documents gave free African Americans the legal right to remain in Indiana, though it guaranteed them little else.

Peters shows that Floyd County played a significant role in the history of the Underground Railroad. She reminds us of those who helped liberate fellow Americans only 150 years ago and at the same time demonstrates that African Americans played a leading role in this process. Finally, for historians searching to unravel the mysteries of this largely hidden American drama, Peters offers new directions.

PEGGY SEIGEL has published articles on Indiana women Civil War nurses and on Quaker women reformers from East Central Indiana. Her study of a Fort Wayne abolitionist newspaper appeared in the September 2001 Indiana Magazine of History.


The large and prestigious School of Music at Indiana University Bloomington now has a large, well-documented, and well-written history to match. George M. Logan (a noted scholar of Renaissance literature) brings experience in academic life and scholarly thoroughness to the task of creating a comprehensive narrative of the school's nearly hundred-year history. The result is a fascinating, detailed, and readable account.

With the exception of the first chapter ("Beginnings"), the book's seven main divisions are named for and follow the school's fortunes through the administrations of four deans (Barzille Winfred Merrill, Robert L. Sanders, Wilfred Bain, and Charles Webb). Bain and Webb, who held the deanship for twenty-six and twenty-four years respectively, are given two chapters each, appropriately placing their work at the heart of Logan's narrative. Naturally, the history tells readers much about the school's development and growth, but the book also provides a telling glimpse into the changing nature of university deanships during the twentieth century.

Appointed in 1919, Merrill grew increasingly autocratic. In contrast, Sanders (whose chapter is subtitled "Experiment in Democracy") attempted to involve the school's faculty in its governance, but as their numbers grew, decision making slowed to a crawl. Truly
magisterial, Bain took control of the school in 1947 and raised it to unprecedented and unequaled prominence during his long tenure. The often brutal manner in which Bain achieved his objectives included maintaining a penurious payroll and dismissing faculty members when a musician Bain felt was more eminent could be persuaded to take a position in Bloomington. Burgeoning enrollments during the postwar years (which not incidentally included veterans with mature voices) enabled Dean Bain to attract a sufficient number of student musicians to support large vocal and instrumental ensembles and credibly establish Indiana University's Opera Theater as the chief jewel in the school's crown. With Bain at the helm of the School of Music and Herman B Wells as the university's chief executive, the sky was the limit, as Wells's backing of Bain was virtually unqualified.

Webb took over when Bain reached mandatory retirement age in 1973. Bain expected his protege to continue to do his bidding, while faculty and students looked to Webb for a welcome change from Bain's dictatorship. The difficulties of deanship in an era of shared governance, rising costs, shrinking budgets, and increased university administrative complexities are clear. A brief postlude discusses the administration of David Woods, who was appointed dean after Webb retired in 1997. Confronted with a mandate for fundraising, a growing deficit, and increasing problems with administration and faculty, he resigned after only two years.

Logan assesses many situations frankly, though the project was tackled mainly from the vantage points of administrators, faculty, and staff, and the book is clearly laudatory. Insight and documentation add authority to the work's many anecdotes. Students of Indiana history and of Indiana University will find that Logan has admirably shown how "the foremost American school of music" (p. 5) attained its status.

ANN L. SILVERBERG (M.M. Musicology, Indiana University School of Music, 1981, Ph.D., Musicology, University of Illinois, 1992) is associate professor of music at Austin Peay State University, Clarksville, Tennessee. She is the author of A Sympathy with Sounds: A Brief History of the University of Illinois School of Music to Celebrate Its Centennial (1995).


Since the invention of the tape recorder enhanced our ability to capture people's memories, oral history has played a major role in documenting state and local history. Our Towns: Remembering Community in Indiana is a welcome addition to our understanding of Indiana history and of the history of community in local settings.

This volume contains the transcripts of thirty-one interviews, recording the recollections of thirty-nine individuals, obtained between 1976 and 1996 by thirteen different interviewers, including John